

Transforming the City

Exhibit Space

It is a dynamic time for Seattle. In the months to come, this exhibit space, hosted by City Planning, will convey the physical transformation of the city as it happens and profile some of the most compelling developments now in the planning stages. Collectively, these projects promise to truly transform Seattle for the better. Each project illustrates how the City is working together with our partners, businesses and citizens toward realizing a more sustainable future.

The goal of the exhibit space is to showcase how design excellence and urban planning are transforming Seattle and to highlight significant projects located downtown, in specific neighborhoods, or that affect the entire city. This year, exhibits will include: Link Light Rail, Central Waterfront, High Point, and Northgate.

Each year, City Planning will work with its partners to profile four projects that meet the following criteria:

- *demonstrate excellence in design or planning efforts;*
- *are of large scale or high profile to warrant attention;*
- *affect the public realm in a long term, significant and beneficial way;*
- *either are planned or under construction;*
- *underscore the City's new emphasis on interdepartmental work;*
- *reflect the City's commitment to sustainable development and illustrate social, environmental and economic goals and benefits;*
- *convey the importance of planning and community involvement;*
- *demonstrate a range of work and emphasize different aspects of planning and development.*

Over the past 150 years, Seattle has transformed from a pioneer settlement to a global commercial center. Timber, railroad, maritime trade and Alaskan gold brought prosperity to the city as it entered the 20th century. Seattle grew rapidly as people arrived and businesses opened to support these industries.

In just the two decades between 1900 and 1920, the city's population leapt from 80,000 to over 315,000. Inspired by the "City Beautiful" ideals displayed at the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, the City commissioned its first comprehensive plan in 1911. Known as the Bogue Plan, after the engineer Virgil Bogue who devised the plan, it provided a guide for development and public improvements needed for a city of one million residents. Although never adopted, it included proposals for park and harbor development that ultimately were realized.

During this era, the City's planning efforts focused on accomplishing formidable engineering projects – reshaping the topography to level the ground and filling in the tide flats to improve the harbor and expand the area to build on. The streetcar played an important role in moving people around in the rapidly developing city, and greatly influenced neighborhood development patterns that remain in place today. Planning advocates also sought to improve living conditions, and zoning emerged as an approach to separate incompatible activities and define minimum standards for light and air. When the City adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1923, Seattle became one of the first cities in the United States to employ zoning.



Colman Dock c. 1915



Yesler and 2nd 1913



1928



1936



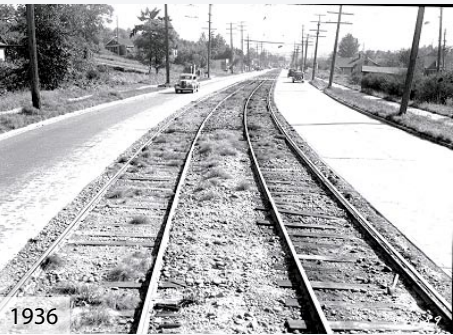
1964

"With Mount Rainier looming over the city on the south, the rising terraces of encircling hills, the lofty snow-capped Olympic peaks closing the westward view beyond a harbor unsurpassed, it would appear that greater opportunities for high and permanent distinction never fell within the privilege of a municipality."

-- Virgil Bogue, 1911



Bogue Plan 1911



1936



1937

Rainier Ave.

Following World War II, the City emphasized a more comprehensive approach to planning to understand the relationship between land use, transportation and city services. The original 1923 ordinance was replaced in 1957 with a plan developed to complement a comprehensive plan coordinating transportation and land use.

Starting mid-century, Boeing, and later Microsoft, brought a new era of growth. The outlying towns grew, as well. Freeways and bridges were constructed or expanded to improve the transportation system between Seattle and the emerging suburban cities. This regional expansion resulted in new challenges – sprawl and traffic congestion – and Seattle’s planning efforts turned to stabilizing and attracting growth as the city’s population declined. Much of the planning activity focused on accommodating the automobile, by then well established as the dominant mode of transportation.

Increased emphasis on accommodating growth resulted in a reaction that fostered the city’s early preservation efforts. When Pike Place Market and Pioneer Square were threatened with demolition in the early 1970s, grassroots efforts succeeded in establishing both as historic districts. Maintaining the city’s rich urban heritage has increasingly become an important planning objective.

Also in the 1970s, the Seattle 2000 Commission was formed to provide a new direction for growth and development in Seattle — a direction that more strongly emphasized maintaining the positive characteristics of the city, with less priority for accommodating the automobile. Planning activity through the 1980s initiated by the work of the commission was later furthered in the 1990s by the Washington State Growth Management Act, which directed cities like Seattle to prepare comprehensive plans consistent with the state’s growth management objectives. Seattle adopted its Comprehensive Plan in 1994 and is committed to updating the plan every 10 years, with the first update being issued by the end of this year.

Over the last decade, Seattle has transformed yet again. It has grown as a cultural center, gaining global recognition. Immigration has increased and Seattle has matured into a truly international community defined by our rich diversity. Today, the computer-related and biotechnology industries are allowing the city’s economy to evolve in new ways. A vibrant downtown, strong neighborhoods, a demonstrated commitment to arts and culture, and an increasingly diverse community enable the City to continue to attract bright, young people from all over the world.



1963 Monson Pike Market Plan

"Seattle has many positives to build upon. We need to make the most of our planning challenges and opportunities... and reach the full potential of this spectacular city."

— Diane Sugimura, Director, Department of Planning and Development



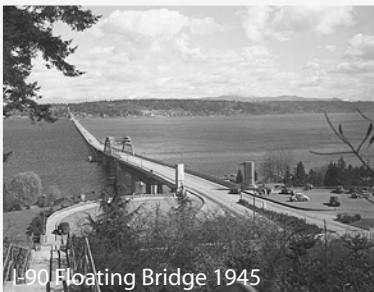
Yesler Terrace 1941



Pike Place 1970



Aurora Bridge 1932



I-90 Floating Bridge 1945



Viaduct Construction 1951



Freeway Construction 1967



1962 Seattle World's Fair

PUBLIC SPACES



Freeway Park



Myrtle Edwards Park



"Green Street" on Cedar St.



Burke-Gilman Trail



"I do not know of any place where the natural advantages for parks are better than here. They can be made very attractive and will be in time one of the things that will make Seattle known all over the world."

– John C. Olmsted (Seattle P-I, May 1, 1903)



Magnuson Park



Kubota Gardens



1965



Gasworks Park Today



1963



Westlake Center Today

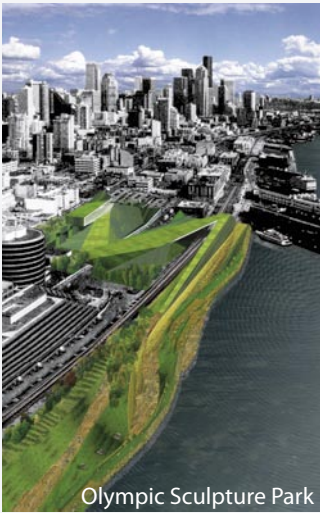


Roxhill Park

Public spaces reflect the city's transformation, as well. New green spaces, plazas and innovative street designs are helping to enhance our quality of life, providing citizens with more breathing room, greater opportunities for recreation, and increasing stretches of land that serve as bicycle and pedestrian trails or gathering spaces.



South Lake Union Park



Olympic Sculpture Park

NEIGHBORHOODS



1920



South Lake Union



"The new Seattle is...a city of swank new stadiums and concert halls, of coffee shops and cafes, of bike paths and street trees – 30,000 planted since 1990 – and of new, walkable neighborhood 'villages' burgeoning with small businesses and establishing identities as distinct as those of Manhattan or Paris. Seattle's strong neighborhoods are the envy of the nation, and the central core of Pioneer Square, downtown, Belltown and Pike-Pine has reached the critical mass of homeowners to become a true community."

– Bill Dietrich (The Congestion Question, Seattle Times, December 8, 2002)



1931

Broadway



Today



1937

Columbia City



Today



1935

Fremont



Today



1921

Greenwood

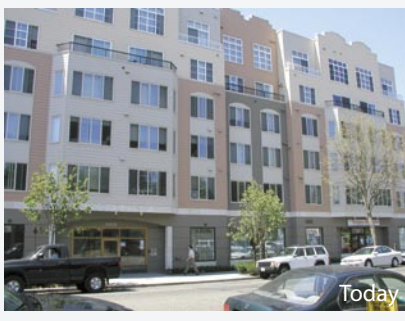


Today



1926

West Seattle



Today



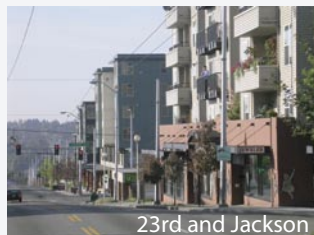
20th Ave. Ballard 1910



Market St. Ballard



Pike/Pine



23rd and Jackson



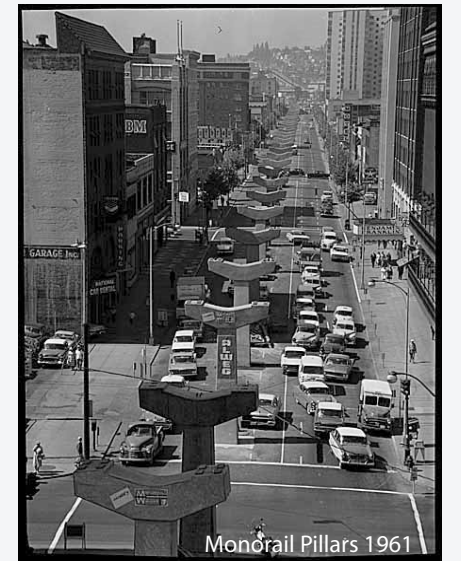
Madison and 19th



12th Avenue

Neighborhoods like Ballard, Fremont, 12th Avenue, Madison and Pike/Pine Corridors, Rainier Valley, Columbia City and the West Seattle Junction have experienced rapid transformation in recent years – protecting the residential character while revitalizing the business districts. In other neighborhoods, such as South Lake Union, Northgate and the University District, new higher density communities offering a mix of residential and commercial uses, transit-oriented development and safe pedestrian access are emerging.

DOWNTOWN



South Downtown

Downtown has witnessed transformation through the development of new residential neighborhoods, new civic investment, new cultural institutions and ongoing commercial development. Transportation investment has also been a key focus with the opening of the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel in 1990, the Sound Transit commuter rail in 2003, the construction of light rail and plans for a new monorail.



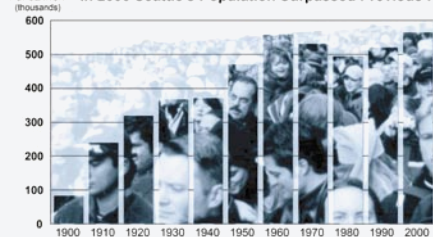
downtown

Household Makeup

One-person households are nearly as common as family households.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000



In 2000 Seattle's Population Surpassed Previous Peak



Sources: 1900-1990: U.S. Census Bureau online www.census.gov/population/documentation, various tables; 2000: U.S. Census Bureau, 2001, Census 2000

"We really only have two choices: we can either control growth or we can let growth control us. We can either manage growth and direct change in ways that reflect our values as a community or we can stand idly by and watch growth slowly bury everything we treasure."

—Mayor Norm Rice, Seattle Comprehensive Plan:
Toward a Sustainable Seattle, prepared remarks April 14, 1993



Seattle is now home to more than 572,000 people and an additional 2.8 million people live in the greater Puget Sound region. Attractive to the young and highly-educated, Seattle owes much of its recent growth to international immigrants and migrants from other states. Migration makes the city more racially and ethnically diverse and contributes to a healthy economic climate. Seattle incomes (both household and family) consistently rank high among U.S. cities.

Seattle has a long history of cultural diversity, thriving today in areas such as the International District, Ballard and the Rainier Valley. Celebrating, preserving and sharing the rich traditions of the region's diverse communities make Seattle vibrant. Over the years, Seattle has helped usher diversity into the political limelight.



Major milestones:

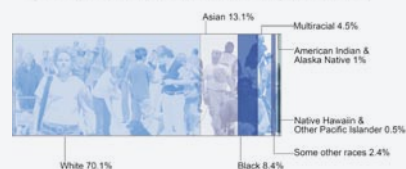
- 1926 Bertha Knight Landes, elected Seattle Mayor.
First woman executive of a major American city.
- 1962 Wing Luke, elected to the Seattle City Council.
First Chinese American elected to a major post in the continental United States.
- 1992 Velma Veloria, elected Washington State Representative for District 11 (Southeast Seattle)
First Asian American elected to a state legislature in the continental United States.

Census 2000 reported one-third of Seattleites were people of color—Hispanic or a race other than white. Notably, half of the city's children were people of color suggesting an even more diverse population in Seattle's future.

- One in six Seattle residents was born abroad.
(Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000)
- Seattle draws and retains young adults making people ages 20 to 34 the city's largest age group.
(Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000)
- More Seattle adults have a bachelor's degree or higher level of education more than in any other U.S. city of 50,000 or more.
(Source: US Census Bureau 2003 American Community Survey)

Racial Diversity & Hispanic Ethnicity in Seattle, 2000

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2001 Table GP-1, Profile of General Demographic Characteristics 2000



demographics



Link Light Rail (Spring 2005)

Connecting our neighborhoods to new opportunities

Sound Transit's Central Link light rail system will bolster our region's economy and connect our neighborhoods to new opportunities. Link is expected to bring hundreds of jobs to the city during its construction, and once completed serve 42,500 daily riders.

The Seattle Department of Transportation has taken the lead in overseeing the City's role in Link construction. In 1998, the City's Design, Planning and Arts Commissions established the Light Rail Review Panel to provide an integrated review of the Sound Transit light rail project. The panel's goal is to create a high quality light rail system for the city of Seattle and the region. The light rail system in Seattle offers an opportunity not just to build a transportation system, but to build better communities around the stations.



Waterfront Plan (Summer 2005)

A once-in-a-century opportunity to create a new front porch for Seattle

Over the years Seattle's central waterfront has evolved from a frontier wilderness to a major economic center, fueling growth in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. In recent years the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the seawall along the central waterfront have been damaged and weakened. This condition has thrust the waterfront toward yet another major milestone in its evolution.

Seattle's Central Waterfront Plan defines the community's vision for the future of this important community resource – a vision that realizes the area's role as the city's "front porch" – and will develop an implementation program that will turn the vision into reality. The plan focuses on potential new public and private uses and design for the water's edge, shoreline areas and adjacent upland areas.



High Point (Fall 2005)

Ensuring the well-being of residents by responding to the community, topography, location, geography and character of West Seattle

Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) is underway with redevelopment of existing affordable housing on a massive scale. The project is built upon sustainable design principles rooted in the total reconfiguration of the landscape and buildings of the High Point garden community in West Seattle. The site is literally being refashioned from the ground up. SHA's commitment to sustainability includes implementing the deconstruction technique, as well as developing a soft drainage system and creating environmentally healthier homes.

The project will be completed in two phases. The first phase focuses on the northern half of the site and housing construction is already underway there with the first rental units expected to be complete in the summer of 2005. When it is finished, this new community will offer high-quality, updated housing and neighborhood facilities for 1,600 families at all income levels. Nearby, the City has recently invested in a new branch library, an expanded community center and street improvements along 35th Avenue Southwest, improving services to the area.



Northgate (Winter 2006)

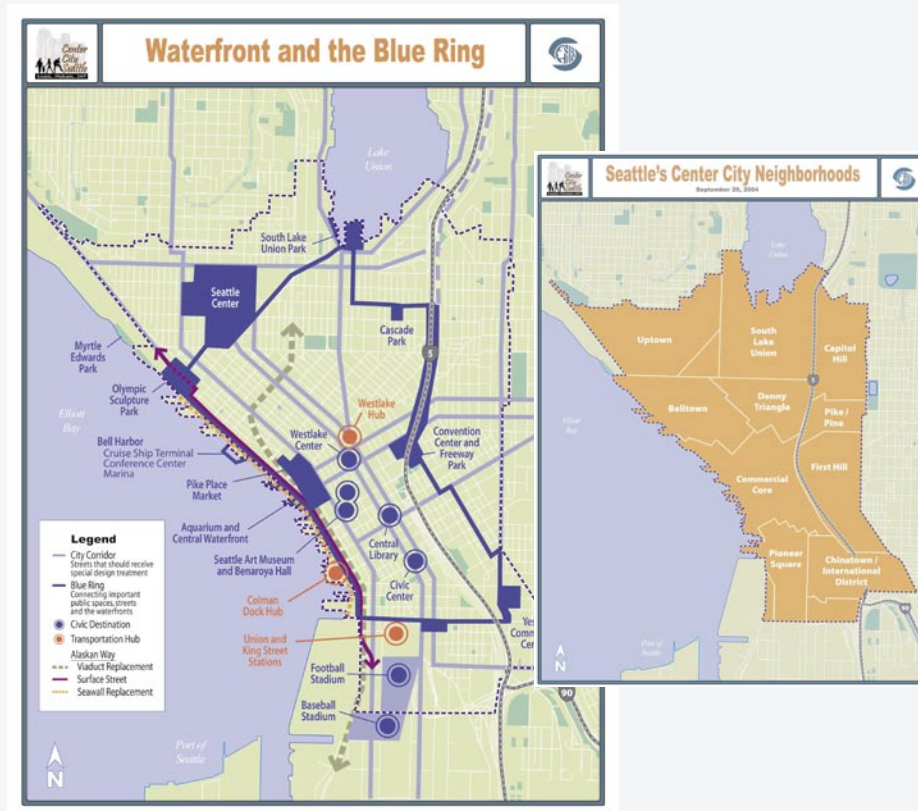
Communities, business and government, working together to create a vital neighborhood

The Northgate Urban Center is starting to become the long-envisioned urban neighborhood that the residents have wanted. Major private investments in the area focus on the Northgate Mall site and include a redeveloped east entry and a new large mixed-use development on the South Lot. Public investments include a public park, a community center and library, street improvements on 5th Avenue Northeast, a coordinated transportation investment plan, a storm water management/open space project, and a new mixed-use project at the King County-Metro transit station. In all these efforts, 5th Avenue Northeast is being established as the spine of the new neighborhood. Phased street improvements, additional open spaces and improved pedestrian connections to the surrounding neighborhoods are also envisioned.

Currently, the City has formed and continues to staff the Northgate Stakeholders Group to provide broad-based representation of residential, business, property owner and citizen interests. This group is working to evaluate proposals and advise decision makers on key issues affecting the Northgate area.



Department of Planning and Development
City of Seattle, Greg Nickels, Mayor



Seattle City Planning: A Vision for the Future of our City

Seattle City Planning was established in 2003 after long range planning functions were moved to the Department of Planning and Development (formerly DCLU) in 2002. This new division serves as a strong voice for planning and urban design in our city. Seattle City Planning engages citizens in an ongoing dialogue about Seattle's future and plays a central role in guiding the long-term development of the built and natural environment. It is comprised of more than 30 staff who evaluate regional growth management policy, monitor and update the City's Comprehensive Plan, draft land use policy, and develop sub-area and urban design plans. The division also includes staff which guide and support the work of the Seattle Planning Commission and the Seattle Design Commission. They are charged to carry out a new mission:

Articulate, advocate and advance our community's vision for an exceptional and vibrant Seattle.

Major projects now underway at Seattle City Planning include:

- Central Waterfront Plan
- Northgate Revitalization
- Center City Seattle Strategy
- Neighborhood Business District Strategy
- South Downtown Sub Area Plan

The division is broken down into five functions. These include:

Comprehensive and Regional Planning



"Toward a Sustainable Seattle," the Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1994, articulates a vision for how Seattle will grow over time while sustaining the highest values of its citizens, promoting a vibrant economy and livable neighborhoods by guiding residential and employment growth in urban villages and urban centers.

Land Use Policy

The City's Land Use Policy unit develops policies for regulating the use and development of land. Staff work toward protecting sensitive natural areas, promoting good urban design, ensuring adequate infrastructure to accommodate growth, and lessening the impact of new development on existing neighborhoods.

CityDesign/Urban Design



Established in 1999, CityDesign is committed to developing and maintaining an urban design vision for Seattle, collaborating with other agencies responsible for the public realm, facilitating citizen dialogue on urban design, and serving as a public resource on urban design for diverse constituencies.

Seattle Planning Commission

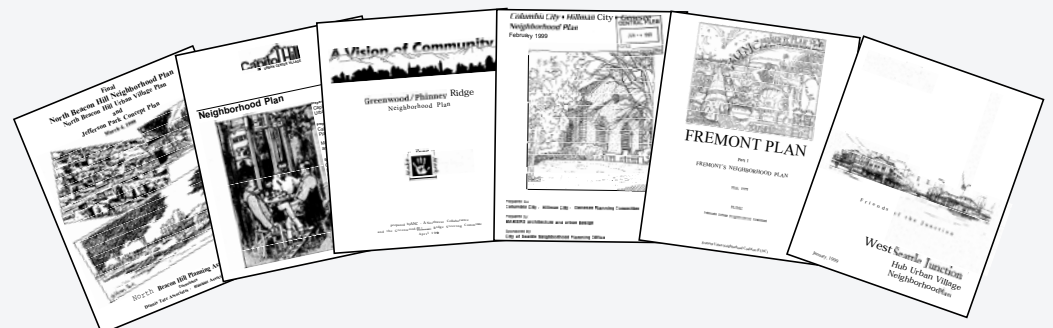


Chartered in 1946 to advise the Mayor, City Council and City departments on planning for the physical development of our city, the Planning Commission's work is framed by the Comprehensive Plan's vision for Seattle in the 21st century and by a commitment to engage citizens in the work of planning.

Seattle Design Commission



Established in 1968 to champion civic design excellence in Seattle's public realm, the Design Commission helps guide the City in developing capital improvement projects that possess a civic scale and character, express the city's diverse cultural identity, and are sustainable and enduring.



city planning